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Institutions of direct, participatory and deliberative democracy in Gdańsk since 2010

Summary

In this PhD dissertation, the case study of the state of democracy in Gdańsk has been presented. City of Gdańsk is known as one of the most democratic cities in Poland, but is this opinion adequate with facts? Author's analysis is focused on the democracy institutions on a local level with special emphasis on citizen initiative as direct democracy instrument, participatory budget as participatory democracy instrument and citizen assembly as deliberative democracy instrument. It is believed among researchers that these new institutions will ensure development of representative democracy, especially on a local level. Author raises an assumption If these democracy instruments can in fact strengthen local democracy or, just the opposite, everyday practice of these instruments can distort and weaken democracy on a local level?

For an attempt to answer these questions, rich source material has been collected. As primary data, documents of local democracy regulations like city charter, legal acts concerning democracy instruments in Gdańsk and examples of citizen initiatives and participatory budget projects have been analysed. Cases of democratic institutions, crises and implementation of democratic innovations in Gdańsk have also been investigated. This data has been confronted with scientific interviews conducted with practitioners of democratic instruments in Gdańsk. Results of triangulation of these methods have been shown in the first summary of this work that shows the state of direct, participatory and deliberative instruments and democracy in Gdańsk. In the further part of the dissertation, these results have been dissected by a research frame of theory of fields proposed by Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam. These proposals have been found as the most appropriate for political science and sociology analysis of dynamic structure on a mesoscale level. Other concepts like Robert Michels "the iron law of oligarchy", concepts of urban movement and social conflict, explicit function and hidden function by Robert Merton, theory of communicative action by Juergen Habermas, theory of deliberation developed by newDemocracy Foundation has also been applied in this stage.

Dissertation has been concluded with pointing possible changes in local democracy in general and changes of direct, participatory and deliberative democracy instruments. Possible development of deliberative bodies on a local level has been presented together with implementation of e-democracy on a local level. In this thesis, possibly the first considerations of

augmented democracy concept has been presented in Polish language. Theory of fields has been also very useful to predict changes in a municipal political system that could affect the shape of local democracy instruments and local democracy in Gdańsk. These changes depend on the evolution of participation and deliberation norms on a local level.